

**Agency Budget Hearing**  
**Appropriations Committee - Connecticut General Assembly**

**March 2, 2015**

**Submitted Testimony**

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At a time when no choices are easy, every participant in state-supported activity must embrace the need to make sacrifices. It is with great respect for the challenges before you that I offer the following information as you consider the most equitable and strategic ways to share what support the State can provide, and distribute the deficits where it cannot sustain or increase its past investment.

The Connecticut Science Center is among the most visible new creations of the State of Connecticut, enjoyed by nearly 1.8 million people since its opening in 2009 and reaching deeply into communities around the state to foster student interest and achievement in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. Operating successfully as an independent non-profit organization, the Science Center generates 93% of the funding it requires from fees paid by customers and donations from philanthropists who support its educational mission. The remaining 7% of funding, approximately \$600,000, has been provided by the State of Connecticut, which has consistently supported its anchor cultural and educational assets to assure their vitality over time. As you evaluate the continuation of funding for the Science Center and many other institutions, it is important to recognize the nearly immediate return this funding generates both in terms of state and local tax revenues and beneficial economic impact, as shown in the following chart:

**Connecticut Science Center**  
**Annual Economic Impact\***

Direct Economic Impact (CT Science Center activity, including Admissions)	\$	9,280,376
Customer-Generated Economic Activity (excluding tax revenues)	\$	7,385,162
State & Local Tax Revenues Generated	\$	848,021
<b>Total Annual Economic Impact</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>17,513,559</b>

\*Methodology and data sources: Arts & Economic Prosperity IV, the Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Cultural organizations and their agencies; Connecticut Science Center.

At a fiscal moment when same-year ROI is clearly imperative, these calculations strongly suggest that taxpayers would receive a significant return on the continuation of the support you have afforded these cultural, educational and economic engines of our state. However, the benefits of our institution extend much farther. The Science Center served nearly 350,000 people last year, including 70,000 school students on STEM-oriented field trips and 40,000 in science outreach programs across the state. In 2014 we trained over 1,100 teachers statewide to become more effective science educators and partnered with 25 schools to help them strengthen STEM curriculum in programs that have begun to show measurable gains for students.

The Connecticut Science Center is an extraordinary, valuable asset to citizens throughout our state, and its financial returns are many times greater than the State's annual support. Support of the Connecticut Science Center is an investment in the future of our state and our economic vitality, as we inspire students with the foundational ideas that will transform them into a competitive workforce.

Thank you.